1: Heimann--1 F-4, 5 (1895-1930) 1932 SD6 Cayapa SD6

THE CAYAPA INDIANS*

by

Max Heimann

In the far north west of the Ecuadorian Republic there is a river named the Santiago. Near the village of Borbon it is joined by one of its tributaries, the Cayapa River. The Cayapa Indians, a harmless tribe consisting of no more than 2500 persons, live on the upper reaches of the Cayapa River and around its sources.

I have never been able to understand why they are called "uncivilized" and "savage." Would it be because they dress more simply, more comfortably, more suitably and cheaply than we European fashion slaves? Or would it be because they speak their own language, unknown to us, and because they do not know how to read and write and do not stuff their heads with the dead weight taught in schools and called "education"? Or even, would it be because they have other customs and manners as well as different moral concepts?

One thing is certain--the Cayapa are happy people, because they are more satisfied with their lot than we Europeans, who are so demanding and feel so superior with our conceit in our sham civilization, in the clothes prescribed for us by the tyrants of "fashion" and in the "wisdom" acquired in schools.

They frequently come to town in small groups of five to 20 persons. I have seen them many hundreds of times, but again and again I am delighted when I meet these small, but well-built and sturdy [282] figures. The men are not taller than 150-160 cm. (Translator--5 ft. to 5ft. 4 in.), while the women are barely 140 cm. (Translator--4 ft. 8 in.). Their skin is copper brown in color.

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* The author a business man, lived in Tumaco (southwest Colombia) for 35 years (1895-1930) and was German Vice-Consul for the Departamento Narino from 1907 to 1930. Although he never actually visited Cayapa villages, he did have occasion to see and question groups of them "many hundreds of times," on their frequent visits to Tumaco. Apart from this, several of his employees have been in Cayapa villages and have given him reports. (K. Th. Preuss).

E:Murra E-4 (no date) 1943 SD6 Cayapa SD6

THE CAYAPA AND COLORADO

By John Murra

INTRODUCTION

The *Cayapa* and the *Colorado* are the last surviving Indian groups in the lush western lowlands of Ecuador (maps 1 and 6). Once an area of extensive Indian occupation, western Ecuador is now inhabited by a Spanish-speaking population of mixed Indian, Negro, and white ancestry, known as montuvios. The *Cayapa* and *Colorado* have precariously managed to hang on to their jungle homes. Speaking closely related if mutually unintelligible languages of the *Barbacoan* division of the *Chibchan* family, they represent the southernmost extension of that major division. Comparative studies with other *Chibchan*-speaking groups in Highland and eastern Colombia, with *Quechua*-speaking Indians in Highland Ecuador, and with various Montaña groups should prove of considerable culture-historical interest.

THE CAYAPA

The *Cayapa* are a riverain people inhabiting the lowlands of northwestern Ecuador. Sprinkled through the jungles of Esmeraldas Province, an area of difficult colonization and control, they managed for centuries to avoid the enslavement suffered by their Highland neighbors or the ethnic annihilation of most Coast aboriginies. Only in the past few decades have their settlements been pushed back into the hills by Spanish-speaking montuvio and Negro homesteaders. World War II requirements in balsa wood, rubber, and other tropical commodities have accelerated this process of displacement and acculturation.

The Cayapa River and its affluents, from the mouth of the Ancón to the foot of the Andes, are the main area of *Cayapa* settlement. Barrett (1925) found three concentration spots: Punta Venado, Sapayo Grande, and San Miguel, corresponding to three political, tribal divisions, which might since have shifted or amalgamated. In addition, small groups of *Cayapa*, in various degrees of acculturation, are found in the Santiago Valley and along the coast into Colombia. Estimates of their numbers vary but hover around a mean of 2,000.

The chief source and authority on the *Cayapa* remains S. A. Barrett's monograph (1925). Barrett visited them in 1908–9, long enough to bring

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
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INDIAN PROVINCE OF ESMERALDAS ECUADOR

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3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
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THE CAYAPA INDIANS OF ECUADOR

By S. A. Barrett

TERRITORY

Geographical Situation

[31] [101] THE people known as the Cayapa Indians live at present almost wholly on the main and tributary streams of the Rio Cayapas, one of the large rivers of the northwestern part of the Province of Esmeraldas, Ecuador, and about ninety miles in a direct line north of the equator. Their [48] territory is within comparatively easy reach of the ocean, which almost all visit at least once a year.

There are a few, perhaps an aggregate of one hundred individuals, who live in several other localities, namely, on the adjacent Rio Santiago, at Pueblo Viejo, and at points along the immediate coast from the Rio Dabele, a few miles south of the town of Esmeraldas, the capital of the province, northward to the Rio Rosario, about eight miles southeast of Tumaco, in the extreme southern- [161] western part of Colombia. However, practically all the Cayapa, approximating fifteen hundred to two thousand individuals, now live on or in the immediate vicinity of the river which bears their name.

133 The Rio Cayapas heads in the western slope of the coast range of the Andes at a point not far from Mt Cotacachi, which attains an altitude of 16,290 feet (4,966 meters). The western slope of this sierra is

3: Barrett E-5 (1908-1909)1925
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133 very abrupt; it soon gives place to the broad coastal plain which stretches thence to the ocean and which is broken only by low foot-hills in its eastern part near the higher mountains, and by short, isolated, low ranges of hills and individual hills in its western part nearer
131 the coast. The portion of this coastal plain now occupied by the Cayapa is that along the lower course of the Rio Cayapas and its tributaries. There are very few, if any, who reside as far as the lowest of the foot-hills of the coast range.

133 The lower course of the Rio Cayapas is wide, very deep, and sluggish; but immediately above tidewater it is a swift, more or less shallow stream, with numerous rapids, and in its upper course its current is so rapid that it may be ascended by canoe only with difficulty, even when not in flood. At time of very high water, on the other hand, the river is quite impassable at certain rapids, especially that known as Corriente Grande. The nature of the coastal plain is such as to produce numerous rapids, some of them of considerable extent, but, so far as it was possible to ascertain, there are no cataracts along the lower course of the river.

To the east of the coast range of the Andes, and separating it from the much higher sierra, spreads an extensive valley, at a lofty altitude, in which are situated the chief interior cities of Ecuador, including Quito (9,350 feet, or 2,850 meters), Ibarra (7,380 feet or 2,250 meters), and others. It was here, according to
[173] their traditions, that the Cayapa formerly lived. Beyond this great main range of the Andes lies the vast Amazon basin.

4 Altschuler E-5 (1959-1960) 1965

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ESMERALDAS PROVINCE, ECUADOR

4.Alberdaler E-6 (1959-1960) 1960
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Chapter I

The Coast, Their Territory and Economy

The Pacific lowlands of the province of Esmeraldas in southwestern Ecuador and the northern part of the province of Esmeraldas in Ecuador, may be thought of as a geographical and cultural unit.

> If the area has any physical unity, it is to be found in the hot, humid climate and the vegetation cover of dense tropical rain forest. . . . The area's position between 1° and 0° north of the equator gives it high year round temperatures and contributes to an almost continuous relative humidity above 90 per cent . . . Culturally the area is one chiefly because of its predominant Negroid population: because of a common way of life based mainly on subsistence agriculture, fishing, and primitive mining . . . Today nearly 80 per cent of the coast population of the lowlands is Negroid, with a large proportion of unmixed African blood. This area, then, may be considered one of the major Negroid areas of Latin America . . . The few Whites and Mestizos of the area are found mainly in the larger trading towns, mining camps, and seaports (Rout 1957:1).

At the southern limits of the Pacific lowland area, in Ecuador, live the Cayapa Indians. Their lives and culture center about the Río Cayapa and its tributaries. At its lower reaches, the river forms a right

angle with the Río Zamora, and together they make up the second largest drainage system in the northeastern part of the province of Zamora-Chinchipe. The confluence of the two rivers lies approximately on 4°0' north latitude, or about 90 miles due north of the equator, and 78°59' west longitude. The area is a tropical rain forest because of the very cold Humboldt Current that flows along much of the Ecuadorian coast, however, extremely dense clouds usually cover the area as far inland as the foothills of the Andes, and moderate the temperatures. They range from 65° to 70° Fahrenheit at night and from 70° to 80° during the daytime, depending upon the amount of cloud cover. Generally, the sky is a very bright overcast. When the cloud cover lessens, the sky is an intense hot blue. There are no weather stations in the Río Zamora area, and consequently we have no readings of any significance. Barrows (1925:4) estimated the annual rainfall on the Río Zamora at between 24.63 feet to 28.46 feet. Since the distances between the Río Zamora and the Río Zamora are not very great, Barrows's observations may reasonably be applied to the Cayuga area as well.

The low alluvial coastal area of the Cayapas-

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4 Altschuler E-5 (1959-1960) 1965
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Cayapa and Colorado and thereby systematically proved the relationship that had always been assumed on purely inspectional grounds (Mance 1962). The most recent classification proposed by Greenberg places Cayapa-Colorado within the sub family called Paezan, which together with Chibchan proper belongs to the Macro-Chibchan family (Greenberg 1956). This classification is similar to that proposed by Mason (Mason 1950:180). A claim that Cayapa is closely related to Mayan is proposed by Professor Aquiles R. Perez T; however, the documentation is not convincing at present (Perez 1960: 491-494).

History. The first actually reliable information on the Cayapa comes from the pen of W. B. Stevenson, who visited them briefly in 1809. At that time, there was but one group of Cayapa (those who lived in the vicinity of Punta Venado). The chief, or alcalde, as Stevenson called him, carried a "baston, insignia of authority" which he presented to Stevenson. He then ordered the Indians to obey Stevenson ". . . and they advanced one after another to kiss the head of the baston, and accompanied me to the house of the alcalde, which was

their traditional tales probably took place by way of the Río Santiago until the confluence with the Río Cayapas was reached; thence, movement was up the Río Cayapas.

In 1879 Wolf marked on his map of Esmeraldas province a "town"--that is, a center of habitation named San Miguel de Cayapas and in 1894 Reascos recorded Cayapa living up the Río Zapallo Grande and the Río San Miguel. The latter group is reported to have an alcalde (Reascos 1894.414). Between 1809 and 1879 the Malabo had apparently been replaced by the Cayapa. By 1908 Barrett reported definitely that the Cayapa were divided into three tribal groups: Punta Venado, Zapallo Grande, and San Miguel. Each group was reported as having its own ceremonial center and being led by an /ʔaʔlɨ/ or subchief. During my 1959-1960 field trip, I was told by Gabriel Arapa, the /ʔaʔlɨ/ of the Punta Venado group, that some twenty-five years earlier a group of people had left the Zapallo Grande section and had formed a new tribal unit with its own /ʔaʔlɨ/. They left after a dispute with the /ʔaʔlɨ/ of Zapallo grande concerning the re-establishment of Pueblo Viejo, the ancient center in the mountainous upper reaches of the Río

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Santiago drainage system. The dissident group claimed that the Saints were stronger in the old area and would be of greater help to the Cayapa. The new group settled in Sapallito, where they have their own ceremonial center, but for reasons unknown they did not return to Pueblo Viejo. Factionalism apparently accounts for some of the tribal fission.

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Settlement Patterns. In 1879 the banks of the Río Cayapas almost as far down as Borbon, a town at the confluence of the Río Santiago and the Río Cayapas, were inhabited by Cayapa Indians while Negroes were found mainly along the Río Santiago (Wolf 1879). By 1894 Borbon had become a Negro town, and the lower reaches of Cayapa settlement had retreated up stream toward the area of the Río Onzole. At this time, about twenty-three Negroes were reported by Basurco to be living at Telembí, a "village" of three houses about 77.5 kilometers from the mouth of the Río Cayapas. The Negroes had been given special permission by the Cayapa to live there provided they did not pan for gold which was found occasionally. (Basurco 1894). In 1960 Telembí was a thriving Negro village of several hundred people, and the greater part

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of the population of the Río Cayapas up to Sapallo Grande was Negro. Isolated Negro enclaves are found today as far up as San Miguel. Negroes tend to live in village settlements, some of which are of political and/or economic importance, while the Cayapa live scattered along the river banks. The town of San José, which lies a few miles below the Río Camerones, is the administrative center for the area. San Antonio, which is located a few miles above Punta Venado, is of considerable commercial importance as it is readily accessible to the small coastal vessels engaged in the banana trade.

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The most characteristic feature of the area is its riverine quality, and settlement and movement centers on the rivers for both Indians and Negroes. The large hilly land areas between the rivers are completely uninhabited, and the dense jungle growth makes foot travel exceedingly difficult. Except for short hunting trips or to secure trees for the making of canoes, the jungle or monte is avoided. The river, on the other hand, is open and free. The river scene is seldom a quiet one. People going down stream maneuver their canoes into mid-channel, taking full advantage

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